United Nations CEDAW/C/70/2

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
16 May 2018

English only

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Seventieth session
2–20 July 2018
Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Implementation of articles 21 and 22 of the Convention

Reports by specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

Summary

In accordance with article 22 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the specialized agencies of the United Nations have been invited to submit to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, at its seventieth session, reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities.

* CEDAW/C/70/1.

** This document was submitted late owing to delayed inputs from other sources.

18-07913 (E) 250518

Please recycle

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	3
II.	Measures taken by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to implement the provisions of the Convention in the countries for which reports are to be considered at the seventieth session of the Committee	3
	A. Australia	3
	B. Cook Islands	5
	C. Cyprus	7
	D. Liechtenstein	8
	E. Mexico	9
	F. New Zealand	10
	G. State of Palestine	12
	H. Turkmenistan	13
Annex		15

I. Introduction

1. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, at its seventieth session, to be held from 2 July to 20 July 2018 in the United Nations Office at Geneva, will examine the national reports of the following countries: Australia, Cook Islands, Cyprus, Liechtenstein, Mexico, New Zealand, State of Palestine and Turkmenistan.

2. As a specialized agency of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) contributes to the building of peace, the alleviation of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, and communication and information. Under its medium-term strategy for the period 2008–2013, gender equality was designated as one of the Organization's two global priorities. It continues to be a priority under the medium-term strategy for the period 2014–2021 and is pursued through a two-pronged approach comprising gender-specific programming and the mainstreaming of gender equality perspectives in all of the Organization's fields of competence.

3. UNESCO has a major role and responsibility within the United Nations system for implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Under article 10 of the Convention, "States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education…". The right to education lies at the heart of the Organization's mission and is an integral part of its constitutional mandate.

4. The Organization's efforts to promote the empowerment of women, women's rights and gender equality are guided by its medium-term strategy, its quadrennial and biennial programme and budget documents, its global priority gender equality action plan for the period 2014–2021, the Convention, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and resolutions and international and regional instruments relevant to the Organization's areas of action.

5. The commitment of UNESCO to pursuing its priority gender equality action plan is facilitated by the Division for Gender Equality in the Office of the Director General. The Division provides policy guidance and recommendations to senior management and the programme sectors for mainstreaming gender equality considerations in UNESCO policies, strategies and programmes; carries out capacity-building; monitors gender parity and work-life balance in the secretariat; and develops and establishes partnerships with other United Nations bodies, regional bodies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private foundations and private sector partners that support women's empowerment and gender equality initiatives.

II. Measures taken by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to implement the provisions of the Convention in the countries for which reports are to be considered at the seventieth session of the Committee

A. Australia

6. Australia has been a party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education since 29 November 1966.

7. In its response to the ninth consultation on the implementation of that Convention, Australia reported the following:

(a) Australia provides financial benefits to special-needs children in order to ensure their access to education or target local governments or schools that are working to improve access for children with special needs. It has also established a system to identify the requirements and individual characteristics of special-needs students by, for example, collecting data, conducting consultations or monitoring and allocating dormitory places for disadvantaged students. One example is the annual nationally consistent collection of data on school students with disability exercise, whereby schools and local governments report on the number of students in Australian schools requiring, owing to disability, an educational adjustment in order to access education;

(b) Several strategies for the country's indigenous populations have been implemented, including the children and schooling programme, which is part of the Government's indigenous advancement strategy. The programme includes projects to improve school attendance, education outcomes and year 12 attendance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The remote school attendance strategy is aimed at improving school attendance among indigenous groups and tribal peoples in remote areas. Local community members are employed as school attendance officers and supervisors to help indigenous children to attend school every day. Scholarships are provided to indigenous students and measures have been taken to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have access to early-childhood schooling;

(c) Difficulties have been encountered in expanding enrolment in primary education and providing access to education in isolated areas. Measures for the socially vulnerable include the higher education participation and partnerships programme, which was launched in 2010 to ensure that Australians from low socioeconomic status backgrounds who have the ability to study at university get the opportunity to do so. The programme provides funding to eligible higher education providers to improve access, retention and completion rates for such students;

(d) With regard to legislation and regulations for the recruitment of teachers and standards for initial training, the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers underpin a nationally consistent approach to teacher registration. All teachers are required to meet the standards in order to be registered or re-registered. Mutual recognition provisions are in place in all states and territories to allow greater flexibility in the registration of teachers and improve mobility for the teaching workforce. In December 2015, education ministers endorsed a revised and strengthened process for the accreditation of initial teacher education courses, which are expected to have a significant impact on the quality of the teaching workforce in the future. Employers and the statutory authorities that regulate teacher registration must comply with legislation prohibiting discrimination in employment. Various avenues are available for lodging complaints and requesting process reviews in case of alleged discrimination or unequal treatment in employment.

8. In Australia it is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of, among other things, age, disability, race, sex, intersex status, gender identity and sexual orientation in certain areas of public life, including education and employment. Federal anti-discrimination laws are contained in the following legislation: the Age Discrimination Act of 2004; the Disability Discrimination Act of 1992; the Racial Discrimination Act of 1975; and the Sex Discrimination Act of 1984.

9. Under article 5 of the Sex Discrimination Act, a person is deemed to have discriminated against another person on the grounds of that person's sex if the discriminator imposes, or proposes to impose, a condition, requirement or practice

that has, or is likely to have, the effect of disadvantaging persons of the same sex as the aggrieved person. The Act also covers discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status. The legal framework has been strengthened to provide additional protection against discrimination.

10. Under article 21 of the Act, it is unlawful for an education authority to discriminate against a person on the grounds of the person's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital or relationship status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, or breastfeeding. The following acts may constitute discrimination: refusing or failing to accept the person's application for admission as a student; denying or limiting access by a student to any benefit provided by the education authority; expelling the student; or subjecting the student to any other detriment.

11. Under article 28, students are legally protected from sexual harassment in education institutions. The provision also covers sexual harassment by adult students and staff members from other institutions with whom students may come into contact with in other settings (for instance, interschool events). Amendments to the Act protect children from sexual harassment, in particular where it may occur through the use of modern technology, such as texting or the use of social networking sites.

12. Education in Australia encompasses early childhood (preschool) and primary education (primary schools), followed by secondary (high schools), tertiary (universities, colleges, and vocational education and training) and adult education. Schooling is compulsory between the ages of 5 or 6 and 15, 16 or 17, depending on the state or territory and date of birth. In recent years, more than three quarters of students have been staying at school until the age of 17. Primary education begins at the ages of 6 or 7, continues for six grades and is provided by government and private schools, some of the latter with religious affiliations. There is no distinct middle-school phase and students completing primary school go on directly to high school, where they follow a common curriculum. Upon completion of their compulsory education, students may choose to stay on at school to complete their university preparation or enter the world of work. Each state and territory administers its own permutation of vocational education and training, which provides hands-on job skills, and technical and further education, which includes vocational tertiary education. Tertiary education takes place at universities and technical colleges, of which there are many, including government-run, private and religious institutions.

13. The regulation and funding of education is primarily the responsibility of the states and territories, but the Federal Government also plays a funding role. Approximately 60 per cent of students attend government primary and secondary schools and 40 per cent private or independent schools. All are required to adhere to government curricula. At the tertiary level, most universities are public, and student fees are subsidized through a student loan programme, under which payment becomes due when graduates reach a certain level of income. Attendance at government schools (also known as public schools) is free for Australian citizens and permanent residents. Stationery, textbooks, uniforms, school camps and other schooling costs are, however, not covered under government funding.

B. Cook Islands

14. Although not a party to the Convention, the Cook Islands responded to the ninth consultation on the implementation of the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. It reported on the following:

(a) The establishment of a system to identify the needs and individual characteristics of special-needs students through, for example, the collection of data, consultations or monitoring;

(b) Difficulties encountered in expanding enrolment in primary education and the challenges associated with providing access to education in geographically isolated areas. In the Cook Islands, after year 10, students may need to travel to another island to continue senior secondary school. The Ministry of Education supports that by providing transport and a grant for families who host students during the school term. Furthermore, an online school, while not a complete solution, supports more isolated communities, especially in the Northern Group;

(c) Legislation and regulations for the recruitment of teachers and standards for initial training. The Performance Management System represents an attempt to improve practice through the professional development of teachers and the achievement of performance excellence. The purpose of the system is to appraise staff and provide a clear overview of their performance. It allows staff to identify personal goals and the professional development support they need to achieve them. Recent changes to make the system more user-friendly are aimed at promoting the growth of staff, motivating and empowering them to demonstrate excellence. The system highlights greater mutual professional accountability as a means to raise the actual and perceived status of the teaching profession. The Cook Islands also reported on the regulation of teachers' salaries and their salaries in respect of those of other civil servants;

(d) Financial assistance, including grants and subsidies, aimed at addressing financial barriers to higher education.

15. Under article 64 of the Constitution of the Cook Islands, the fundamental human rights and freedoms are guaranteed without discrimination on the grounds of race, national origin, colour, religion, opinion, belief or sex. The Education Act contains legislative provisions concerning measures in support of the right to education for girls and women. The Act provides for an education system in which everyone involved is treated with dignity, respect and understanding and in a way that is consistent with the fundamental human rights and freedoms as guaranteed under the Constitution, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability. Lastly, the strategic policy on equity, access and participation provides that all Cook Islanders, regardless of ability, gender, wealth, location, language or ethnic origin, may participate in relevant, good quality and appropriate learning experiences. It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to provide such opportunities and mitigate any barriers to accessing them that may exist.

16. Public education is free and compulsory for all children between the ages of 5 and 15. Under the aegis of the Ministry, the education system is administered by three regions: Rarotonga Island, the Southern Group and the Northern Group. The use of Maori is encouraged in all schools but English is also widely used. Primary education covers the first five years, with an emphasis on agriculture, mathematics and science. In addition to public education, a number of church-based programmes established throughout the islands account for approximately 12 per cent of student enrolment. Secondary education covers students aged from 11 to 17 or 18 years. The secondary school curriculum includes specific technical courses, commercial studies, environmental studies, social science, health and Maori culture and heritage. Distance education includes vocational and cultural education, with special emphasis on Maori culture. Post-secondary programmes are offered by colleges and the Cook Islands campus of the University of the South Pacific.

17. The purpose of the "Flying fish (*mararo*) spawning in Mitiaro" project, supported by UNESCO, is to make a documentary on a traditional fishery in the

southern Cook Islands, with the emphasis on the role of women in the fishery and post-harvest processing.

18. The "Networks–leadership and development for girls, women and youth through sport" project aims at encouraging the sport of netball among women and girls in the Cook Islands through a series of six-week programmes, with a view to improving their general well-being, social competencies and participation in the community.

19. The "Women as instigators of Imene tuki" project highlights the role of women in singing, preserving and transmitting the traditional national hymn, Imene Tuki, to the younger generations. The project involves research into the hymn's history and origins and includes workshops to introduce younger people to the technical aspects of its performance. Women are the main actors of the project, as they are at the heart of the preservation and transmission of the tradition.

C. Cyprus

20. Although a party to the Convention since 9 June 1970, Cyprus did not respond to the ninth consultation on its implementation.

21. Under article 28 of the Constitution of Cyprus, all persons are equal before the law, the administration and justice and are entitled to equal protection thereof and treatment thereby. Every person enjoys all the rights and liberties provided for under the Constitution without any direct or indirect discrimination against any person on the grounds of community, race, religion, language, sex, political or other convictions, national or social descent, birth, colour, wealth, social class, or on any ground whatsoever.

22. Under article 20, every person has the right to receive, and every person or institution has the right to give, instruction or education, subject to such formalities, conditions or restrictions as are in accordance with the relevant communal law and are necessary only in the interests of the security of the republic, the constitutional order, public safety, public order, public health, public morals, the standard and quality of education, or for the protection of the rights and liberties of others, including the right of parents to secure for their children such education as is in conformity with their religious convictions. Primary education is free and available in communal primary schools. Primary education is compulsory for all citizens of such school age as may be determined by communal law. Education, other than primary education, is made available by the Greek and Turkish communal chambers, in deserving and appropriate cases, on such terms and conditions as may be determined by relevant communal law.

23. The education system in Cyprus is divided into pre-primary (ages 3–6), primary (ages 6–12), secondary (ages 12–18) and higher education (ages 18 and above). Full-time education is compulsory for all children between the ages of 5 and 15. Primary education is compulsory and provided free of charge in public schools. Generally, the same classroom teacher organizes the teaching and learning process in all subjects. Children enter primary school at the age of 6 years and receive a certificate of attendance upon conclusion of the six-year programme (grades 1–6). Subjects studied are academic in the British tradition. Public secondary general education is divided into two three-year cycles: lower secondary (the final stage of compulsory basic education) and upper secondary. Students who have not completed compulsory education and are aged 14 may enter the apprenticeship system, which is free of charge and consists of a two-year training period, giving access to various occupations. Upper secondary education takes three forms but all successful students qualify to enter university. At lyceum schools, the curriculum remains academic. Technical schools emphasize scientific subjects and vocational schools focus on

workshop practices and industrial training. A variety of certificates are awarded. The Human Resource Development Authority is responsible for ongoing vocational training, by presenting courses and setting standards. Higher education institutions include public universities (the University of Cyprus, the University of Applied Sciences and Arts and the Open University of Cyprus) tertiary-level institutions offering professionally oriented programmes and some private education institutions.

24. Following a report by a committee of seven academics, which identified weaknesses in the education system, the Government launched an ambitious education reform programme in 2005, inviting dialogue among all stakeholders. The programme led to comprehensive changes and innovations at all levels, creating a democratic, student-focused and inclusive system that is open to all students, irrespective of social, racial or ethnic background, gender, or physical or mental ability, and offers high-quality education for all.

25. A project on gender and bullying in academia, supported by UNESCO, is designed to examine the perceptions of university staff with regard to bullying in academia, explore the prevalence and nature of the phenomenon among staff and students and between the two groups and look at the capacity of staff to address such behaviour at the individual and institutional level. It is also aimed at identifying possible correlations between such behaviour and questions of self-image or self-esteem and the professional identity of academic staff.

D. Liechtenstein

26. Liechtenstein is not a party to the Convention and it did not respond to the ninth consultation on the implementation of the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education.

27. Under article 31 of the Constitution of Liechtenstein, all citizens are equal before the law. There is equality of rights between the sexes.

28. Articles 16 and 17 guarantee the right to education, which is compulsory for all between the ages of 6 to 15 years. The State ensures that adequate compulsory instruction in the elementary subjects is provided free of charge in public schools. All persons with children in their care are obliged to ensure that those children receive an education of the standard required in public elementary schools. Education in private institutions is permissible, provided that it conforms with the legal regulations governing the period of schooling, educational aims and the arrangement prevailing in the public schools. The State provides appropriate scholarships to help children without financial means to attend institutions of higher education.

29. Following optional kindergarten, children enter primary school at the age of 6 years and remain there for 5 years. Middle school, of which there are three types designed to meet individual needs, follows thereafter. The first type consists of a four-year programme with practical applications. The programme of the second type, which is equivalent to grammar school, also lasts four years. Lastly, gymnasiums offer a three-year academic curriculum followed by a final year in any of the above institutions. All programmes conclude with the award of a lower secondary school certificate. Secondary education is provided in gymnasiums, which students aged between 15 and 18 years attend for four more years. They may choose between five different programmes, according to their preferred specialization, before sitting examinations for a matriculation certificate that entitles them to enrol for tertiary education at universities in Austria, Switzerland and at the University of Tübingen, Germany. A further type of profession-oriented school allows more practically-minded students to advance their career prospects in areas of business, design, engineering or information technologies. The certificate awarded upon their passing

the final examinations also allows them to pursue further studies in neighbouring countries. Vocational education is available to students who complete middle school. They may embark on an optional tenth grade that prepares them for their personal and vocational future.

E. Mexico

30. Although not a party to the Convention, Mexico responded to the ninth consultation on the implementation of the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. Mexico reported on the provision of scholarships for indigenous students.

31. Under article 2 of the Constitution of Mexico, any form of discrimination is prohibited, whether based on ethnic or national origin, gender, age, disabilities, social status, medical conditions, religion, opinions, sexual orientation, marital status, or any other form that violates human dignity or seeks to annul or diminish the rights and freedoms of persons. The equality of men and women is guaranteed under article 4.

32. The right to education for all is enshrined in article 3. Education at the preschool and elementary, middle and high school levels is compulsory. Preschool, and elementary and middle school make up what is considered to be basic education. The State guarantees the quality of education in such a way that education material and methods, school organization, education infrastructure and the suitability of teachers and principals ensure the highest level of learning achievement by students. The education provided by the State is secular and therefore entirely separate from any religious doctrine. The federal authorities establish the syllabus for preschool, elementary and secondary education, as well as for teacher training colleges, taking into account the opinions of the state governments and the Government of the Federal District, civil society groups involved in education, teachers and parents. Education provided by the State is free of charge. Private schools may provide all kinds of education in accordance with the same purposes and criteria established for public schools and in compliance with the law. The State has the power to grant and withdraw official accreditation for studies completed at private institutions.

33. Primary education in its current form became compulsory in 2009 and runs from grade 1 to grade 6, for students aged from 6 to 12 years. As an element of basic education, primary school is free of charge and preceded by one year of compulsory preschool education. The curriculum, which is standardized for public and private schools, includes Spanish, mathematics, natural sciences, history, geography, art and physical education. The National Institute for Educational Assessment monitors standards and provides quality control. Secondary education is organized in two stages: lower secondary education for grades 7–9, which is compulsory, and upper secondary education for grades 10–12. At state schools, students may follow an academic or technical track. Students who enrol in the academic track generally continue their education at the upper secondary level. Lower secondary education programmes that do not lead to further study are non-academic and place a strong emphasis on vocational, commercial and artistic training.

34. Many upper secondary schools are affiliated with large public universities; others include State-controlled colleges, preparatory schools or private schools. Two degree tracks are offered: academic preparatory education for university and professional technical education. The academic track provides students with a general academic curriculum for the first two years of study, followed by more specialized study in the final year. In the professional track, professional technical institutions provide technical preparation that prepares students to work immediately following completion. Vocational education is offered at professional technical institutions to

students who have completed lower secondary school. Students graduate with the qualification of professional technician, technical professional or base-level technician, depending on the type of institution they attend and the programme in which they enrol. The Mexican higher education system largely follows the American model. Significant growth in demand has led to the expansion of programmes and degree options, in particular at private institutions, where minimal fees are charged. Higher education is offered at various types of institution: public autonomous universities, State institutions, institutions dependent on the Federal Government, private independent institutions, private institutions with official accreditation and others without. Each state in Mexico has a public university and a teacher training college, which award graduates university diplomas.

35. The main objective of the national workshop on gender and education in Mexico, a project supported by UNESCO, is to develop a platform for sharing experiences and building partnerships between public institutions and agencies of the United Nations to promote gender equality in education.

36. The goal of the project on strengthening the capacity of indigenous young people from Chiapas and Oaxaca with regard to HIV prevention through a gender equality approach is to build an evaluated and comprehensive model for preventing gender violence by using an intercultural approach.

37. A project on developing the capacity of media stakeholders to promote gender equality in Mexico is designed to train journalists in gender-equality policies and the application of the UNESCO Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media.

38. The goal of a project on the empowerment of women and gender equality in south-eastern Mexico is to implement actions focused on gender equality in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and thereby contribute to changing attitudes that lead to inequality for women and girls at school, in the home and in their general surroundings. The idea is to bring together different groups to combat the marginalization of women and girls and promote their empowerment and gender equality through education and the promotion of good-quality gender education, and by improving the public's understanding and awareness of gender equality and related issues.

F. New Zealand

39. New Zealand, which has been a party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education since 12 February 1963, responded to the ninth consultation on the implementation of the Convention. In particular, New Zealand reported on the following:

(a) Initiatives to challenge gender stereotypical choices in education;

(b) The provision of financial benefits for children with special needs in order to ensure their access to education, the targeting of local governments or schools that are working to improve access for such children and the provision of scholarships for indigenous students;

(c) The provision of distance education from early childhood for students in remote or rural areas;

(d) Legislation and regulations on the recruitment of teachers and standards for initial training;

(e) Financial assistance, including grants and subsidies, to address financial barriers to higher education, in particular support for students from low-income

households to attend private schools, including funding contributions towards fees and course-related costs at private schools of their choice;

(f) Measures to improve the quality of adult education in the workplace or directed towards developing professional competences;

(g) Funding for programmes for adults in the workplace that deliver job-specific literacy and numeracy skills, including a literacy and numeracy for adults assessment tool that will provide reliable information on the reading, writing and numeracy skills of adults that can be used in the planning of learning schemes to strengthen those skills;

(h) The role of civil society and NGOs in complementing that of formal education in strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the overall development of the human personality;

(i) The language policy network that is looking at issues such as language discrimination, access to interpreting services and the place of the Maori language, Pacific languages and languages spoken by other ethnic groups, as well as the development of curricula adapted to the needs of other national minorities.

40. Under article 19 of the Bill of Rights Act and article 21 of the Human Rights Act, everyone has the right to freedom from discrimination, including on the grounds of sex and sexual orientation. Under article 57 of the Human Rights Act, it is unlawful for an educational establishment, or the authority responsible for the control of an educational establishment, or any person concerned in the management of an educational establishment or in teaching at an educational establishment, by reason of any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination: to refuse or fail to admit a person as a pupil or student; to admit a person as a pupil or a student on less favourable terms and conditions than would otherwise be made available; to deny or restrict access to any benefits or services provided by the establishment; or to exclude a person as a pupil or a student or subject him or her to any other detriment.

41. Education in New Zealand follows the model of primary and secondary school, followed by tertiary education. From the ages of 6 to 16 years, education is compulsory and free (although course materials are not). A pupil living more than 5 km from their nearest school may opt for distance learning. Most children enter primary school at the age of 5 and remain for six years. The primary education programme merges into middle school in several ways. Children may remain at their primary school for grades 7 and 8, or complete those two years at bridging intermediate school (stream "a"). Alternatively, they may go directly to junior secondary school, where they spend 4 years (stream "b").

42. Students who follow either of two versions of stream "a" complete their last five years at secondary schools, while students following stream "b" spend the last three years at senior secondary school. This composite model is designed to accommodate varying structural capacity in city and rural areas. Sparsely populated areas may have only primary and secondary schools, while students in the cities may have the benefit of all four tiers. In the end, however, the outcomes are the same and the same high teaching standards prevail. More than 40 industry training organizations operate under the Industry Training Act and are financed by a combination of State funding and contributions from trade and industry. They purchase capacity blocks from accredited service providers in advance. Training is increasingly being provided in the workplace. The outputs include apprenticeships for young people and retraining for adults of all ages. Tertiary education takes place at eight universities and a variety of teacher training colleges. In addition, several private training establishments fill gaps in the State system, for example in practical business, computing, health care and hospitality skills.

G. State of Palestine

43. The State of Palestine is not a party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education and did not respond to the ninth consultation on the implementation of the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education.

44. Under article 9 of the Basic Law of the State of Palestine, Palestinians are equal before the law and the judiciary, without distinction based upon race, sex, colour, religion, political views or disability.

45. The right of all citizens to education is enshrined in article 24 of the Basic Law. Education is compulsory until at least the end of the basic level and free in public schools and institutions. The independence of universities, institutes of higher education and scientific research centres is guaranteed by law in a manner that assures the freedom of scientific research and literary, artistic and cultural creativity. Private schools and education institutions comply with the curriculum approved by the Palestinian Authority and are subject to its supervision.

46. Compulsory basic education covers 10 years and is organized in two stages: the preparatory stage or lower basic level (grades 1 to 4) and the empowerment stage or upper basic level (grades 5 to 10). The admission age is 6 years. Secondary education lasts two years (grades 11 and 12) and consists of academic and technical and vocational education. Upon completion of grade 12, students sit the school-leaving examination and, if successful, receive the general secondary school certificate. Higher education institutions include universities and university colleges, polytechnics and community colleges. Community colleges offer diploma programmes of one and two years' duration aimed at preparing mid-level workers and technicians. At the university level, professional diploma and diploma degree programmes are also offered. The duration of studies is one (professional diplomas) or two years and, in some cases, three years (vocational programmes and pedagogical studies). The duration of bachelor's degree programmes is normally four years (six years in the case of medicine). Programmes at the postgraduate level leading to a higher diploma or master's degree generally last two years.

47. The objective of the UNESCO project on empowering the Palestinian Female Journalists Club to promote freedom of expression and introduce women's discourse into the public sphere is, through a five-day workshop, to provide skills and knowledge to 30 female journalists working for online and print media in gender-sensitive press reporting, as well to provide psychosocial counselling to 15 female journalists in the Gaza Strip through group trauma therapy for four days and to another 15 female journalists in the West Bank for two days.

48. The objective of the project on building gender accountability in Palestine is to produce, analyse and share policy ideas with target audiences and to help to shape the policy debate by connecting academic, multilateral and governing authorities in a cohesive and collaborative manner, with the focus on creating a resource for formulating, reviewing and coordinating policies on gender equality and women's empowerment.

49. The objective of the young girl storytellers project is to preserve and develop the methodology of learning through storytelling and thereby help to create an interactive learning environment in the classroom. Arabic language and civic education teachers adopt this approach for the effective transfer of knowledge to students through storytelling, drawing, role-playing and other interactive activities and to ensure the participation of all students, regardless of their academic achievements.

50. The folk stories and puppet theatre for women and children project focuses on reviving and raising public interest in popular storytelling and folk tales through specialized training courses for women artists, educators and cultural practitioners.

H. Turkmenistan

51. Although not a party to the Convention, Turkmenistan responded to the ninth consultation on the implementation of the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. In particular, Turkmenistan reported on the following:

(a) The option for children with disabilities to attend mainstream schools or special schools and programmes;

(b) Programmes and support in areas such as health care, nutrition (such as free meals), education materials or social care for preschool-age children;

(c) The establishment, reflecting a global commitment to placing lifelong learning at the heart of the new education agenda, of adult education opportunities and a lifelong learning system catering to individuals who have not completed general secondary education;

(d) The establishment of external evaluation systems and other forms of assessment to gauge the efficiency of education programmes and ensure that standards are maintained;

(e) The regulation of teacher salaries with respect to those of other civil servants and pay rises awarded in order to boost interest in the teaching profession and improve the quality of general education.

52. Article 19 of the Constitution of Turkmenistan guarantees equality of rights and freedoms of the individual and citizens and their equality before the law, regardless of nationality, race, gender, origin, property and official status, place of residence, language, religion, political beliefs, party affiliation or lack thereof. Under article 20, men and women have equal civil rights. Violations of equality on the basis of gender are punishable by law. Under article 27, men and women of marriageable age the right, by mutual consent, to marry and create families. Spouses have equal rights in family relations.

53. The right of all to education is enshrined in article 38. Basic education is compulsory and all are entitled to receive it in public schools free of charge. The State ensures the availability of vocational education for everyone according to their abilities. The State sets education standards that are compulsory for all education institutions.

54. The compulsory education programme consists of two stages: "Sovat" (reading and writing), covering grades 1 to 3, or grades 1 to 4 in schools where tuition is provided in Kazakh, Russian and Uzbek; and "Bilim" (knowledge), covering grades 4 to 9, or grades 5 to 10 in schools where tuition is provided in Kazakh, Russian and Uzbek. The admission age is 7 years. Starting from the 2007–2008 academic year, the duration of compulsory education was extended from 9 to 10 years, divided into primary (grades 1 to 3) and secondary education (grades 4 to 10). Upon completion of the general secondary education programme, students sit State examinations and, if successful, receive the school leaving certificate. Colleges and technical lyceums offer two-year programmes to secondary school leavers, preparing them for university or training them at the technician level. Post-secondary vocational and technical education is offered at training vocational centres (one to six months of study, leading to a certificate of qualification according to the profession); vocational colleges (6 to 10 months of study, leading to a diploma); and vocational lyceums (one and a half

years of study, leading to a diploma). Specialized education at the post-secondary level is offered by colleges (medical, pedagogical, musical and artistic) and technical schools. The duration of courses ranges from two to four years. Upon completion, students who pass the State examinations are awarded a Diploma of Specialized Secondary Education. Higher education institutions offer programmes in a variety of fields. Admission to higher education is based on the results of entrance exams and the most successful students are admitted on a competitive basis. The duration of programmes, which lead to the Higher Education Diploma, ranges from five to six years (six years in the case of medicine and some art institutes). Postgraduate programmes leading to the degree of Candidate of Science generally last three years and involve the preparation and defence of a thesis. Doctoral programmes leading to the degree of Doctor of Science involve an additional three years of study and supervised research.

Annex

Education statistics for countries reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its seventieth session: gross enrolment ratios of women and men and gender parity index

		Gross enrolment ratio, primary			*Gross enrolment ratio, secondary*			*Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary*		
Country	*Year*	*Female (percentage)*	*Male (percentage)*	*Gender parity index*	*Female (percentage)*	*Male (percentage)*	*Gender parity index*	*Female (percentage)*	*Male (percentage)*	*Gender parity index*
Australia	2009	105.56401	105.34099	1.00212	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2010	105.78676	105.9763	0.99821	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2011	105.92487	106.22072	0.99721	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2012	106.25127	106.68583	0.99593	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2013	106.39113	106.72039	0.99691	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2014	105.92241	106.20978	0.99729	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2015	102.2274	102.21921	1.00008	146.81669	168.90408	0.86923	142.27329	98.45022	1.44513
	2016	101.31774	101.36168	0.99957	142.65578	164.48971	0.86726	144.09929	100.76225	1.43009
Cook Islands	2009	110.44084	108.82029	1.01489	90.44527	79.28453	1.14077	..	..	..
	2010	103.60465	104.62555	0.99024	88.13084	80.71368	1.09189	..	..	..
	2011	105.71096	109.27835	0.96735	104.49944	83.80213	1.24698	..	..	..
	2012	105.80046	111.47161	0.94912	101.22768	94.55782	1.07054	50.09107	41.20603	1.21562
	2013	102.41935	106.22797	0.96415	97.8959	84.17969	1.16294	..	..	..
	2014	104.96536	109.75323	0.95638	93.64732	85.02463	1.10141	..	..	..
	2015	99.76905	109.08019	0.91464	93.2973	85.75697	1.08793	..	..	..
	2016	105.23256	111.72333	0.9419	90.07471	84.86377	1.0614	..	..	..
Cyprus	2009	104.7597	105.94246	0.98884	99.04687	97.75993	1.01316	48.46208	55.5818	0.87191
	2010	101.63377	101.6154	1.00018	91.994	90.91241	1.0119	45.62976	50.87154	0.89696
	2011	100.79486	101.58575	0.99221	93.53255	92.15455	1.01495	47.29882	45.81109	1.03248
	2012	100.05692	100.28753	0.9977	96.18629	94.45482	1.01833	49.71835	42.16806	1.17905
	2013	99.87841	99.65207	1.00227	98.52653	98.10749	1.00427	53.69162	41.60205	1.2906
	2014	99.58708	98.74593	1.00852	99.45569	99.37944	1.00077	62.59883	44.1031	1.41937
	2015	99.29021	99.3095	0.99981	99.40921	100.13361	0.99277	69.39547	51.11182	1.35772
	2016	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Country	Year	Gross enrolment ratio, primary			Gross enrolment ratio, secondary			Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary		
		Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index	Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index	Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index
Liechtenstein	2009	106.52174	104.87078	1.01574	97.84657	113.51715	0.86195	22.52592	45.65603	0.49338
	2010	102.3374	108.60656	0.94228	100	117.6354	0.85008	27.35761	44.3447	0.61693
	2011	105.40827	104.5082	1.00861	101.06738	122.12329	0.82758	29.93513	56.30324	0.53168
	2012	105.11425	102.63158	1.02419	101.46569	119.48229	0.84921	30.07246	54.37229	0.55308
	2013	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2014	102.25564	103.05907	0.9922	103.27422	127.84983	0.80778	24.14105	50.81227	0.4751
	2015	104.80349	106.49215	0.98414	101.72176	130.72626	0.77813	21.88919	44.84581	0.4881
	2016	103.37691	107.47951	0.96183	101.90678	130.27066	0.78227	24.75158	45.33092	0.54602
Mexico	2009	103.78892	105.36324	0.98506	87.59191	79.81597	1.09742	25.8713	24.79245	1.04352
	2010	104.64004	105.56707	0.99122	87.88377	80.85443	1.08694	26.76374	25.846	1.03551
	2011	105.62377	105.91016	0.9973	87.87811	81.59102	1.07706	27.55092	26.85535	1.0259
	2012	106.56508	106.23633	1.00309	89.28781	83.35197	1.07121	28.75687	28.2777	1.01695
	2013	106.37459	105.81638	1.00528	90.9356	85.65117	1.0617	29.56333	29.36327	1.00681
	2014	105.52744	104.84629	1.0065	94.65662	89.09099	1.06247	30.3266	30.13604	1.00632
	2015	104.46217	103.78941	1.00648	98.72493	91.91049	1.07414	30.82848	30.76117	1.00219
	2016	104.22685	103.65207	1.00555	101.36109	93.32905	1.08606	37.25461	36.45774	1.02186
New Zealand	2009	101.14229	100.98746	1.00153	126.47641	122.93468	1.02881	98.41501	68.01126	1.44704
	2010	101.277	100.95279	1.00321	121.82136	116.44528	1.04617	98.71118	67.39784	1.4646
	2011	100.14963	99.43149	1.00722	121.85554	115.34472	1.05645	96.02194	66.08201	1.45307
	2012	98.7047	98.01689	1.00702	120.65511	113.76536	1.06056	94.82258	64.02142	1.48111
	2013	98.27894	97.62841	1.00666	119.19317	111.55323	1.06849	92.91255	62.64508	1.48316
	2014	97.78728	97.46179	1.00334	119.08891	111.88177	1.06442	92.6189	64.40892	1.43798
	2015	98.21236	97.68881	1.00536	118.13917	111.53329	1.05923	94.90342	67.33279	1.40947
	2016	99.19894	98.46014	1.0075	117.82183	111.014	1.06132	96.38803	68.15397	1.41427
State of Palestine	2009	89.2913	89.64048	0.9961	90.53995	84.74217	1.06842	52.73078	40.53141	1.30099
	2010	90.10145	91.86653	0.98079	89.00364	82.43894	1.07963	54.87524	41.08775	1.33556
	2011	92.02445	92.98768	0.98964	88.09323	79.87943	1.10283	57.69782	41.87515	1.37785
	2012	93.81057	95.37289	0.98362	87.04759	79.44968	1.09563	56.64104	40.09151	1.41279
	2013	94.86621	94.333	1.00565	86.53101	78.94341	1.09611	54.65387	36.43958	1.49985
	2014	94.86627	95.46035	0.99378	86.36061	78.61521	1.09852	53.79607	34.63504	1.55323

Country	Year	Gross enrolment ratio, primary			Gross enrolment ratio, secondary			Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary		
		Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index	Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index	Female (percentage)	Male (percentage)	Gender parity index
	2015	94.38817	94.39533	0.99992	87.21184	79.38059	1.09865	54.43114	34.549	1.57548
	2016	93.98795	93.85668	1.0014	87.9812	79.92117	1.10085	52.76529	33.14038	1.59218
Turkmenistan	2009	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2010	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2011	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2012	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2013	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2014	87.53433	89.24829	0.9808	83.99895	87.59939	0.9589	6.19582	9.70376	0.6385
	2015	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2016	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics data (accessed on 11 May 2018).